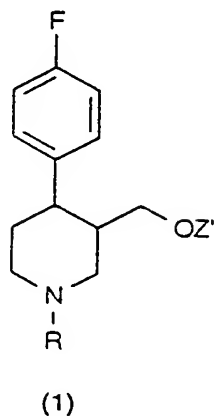


What is claimed is:

1. A process for the preparation of 4-aryl-piperidines of structure (1)

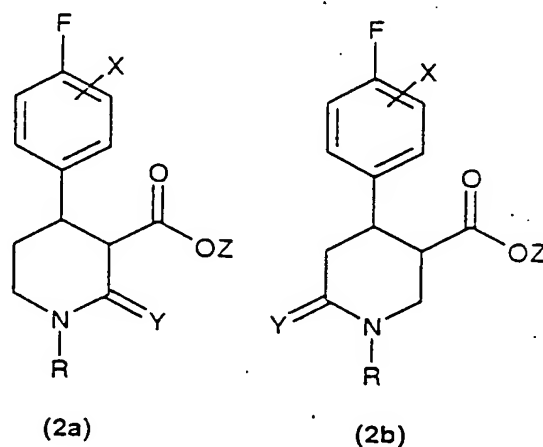


5

in which R is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl, aryl, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, arylalkoxycarbonyl, aryloxy carbonyl group, and Z' is a 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl group,

which comprises reduction of a compound of structure (2a) or (2b)

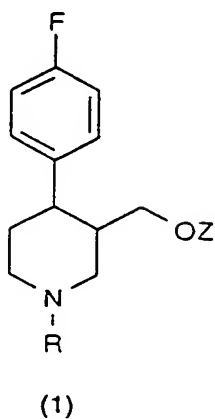
10



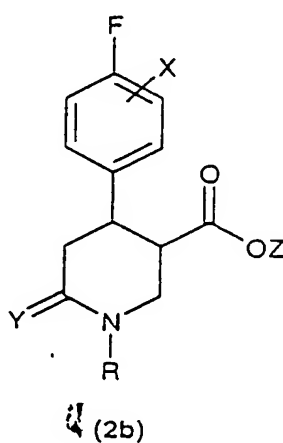
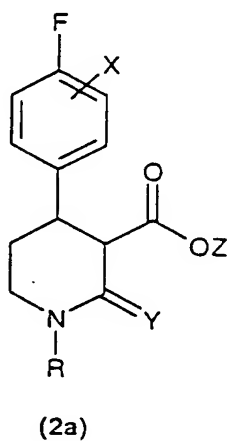
in which Y is oxygen or sulphur, and

- 15 R and X are as defined above and Z is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl or aryl group, and where Z is other than a 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl group thereafter converting Z to 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl.

2. A process for the preparation of 4-aryl-piperidines of structure (1)



- 5 in which R is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl, aryl, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, arylalkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl group, and Z is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl or aryl group, most suitably where Z is a hydrogen atom or a 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl group,
- 10 which comprises reduction of a compound of structure (2a) or (2b)

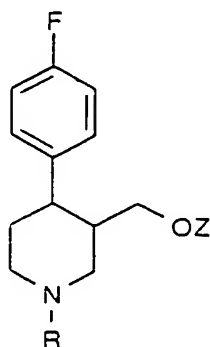


in which Y is oxygen or sulphur, and R, X, and Z are as defined above.

3. A process according to claim 1, in which the reduction is carried out by catalytic hydrogenation at atmospheric or above atmospheric pressure or using hydride reagents.

4. A process according to claim 1, in which a compound of structure (1) in which Z is alkyl, aralkyl or aryl is prepared by selective reduction of the ester group in a compound of structure (2a) or (2b) in which Z is alkyl, aralkyl or aryl.

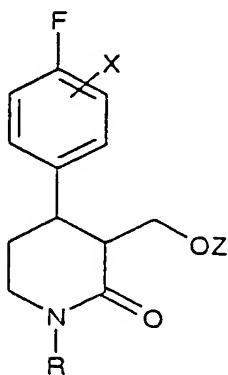
5. A process for the preparation of 4-aryl-piperidines of structure (1)



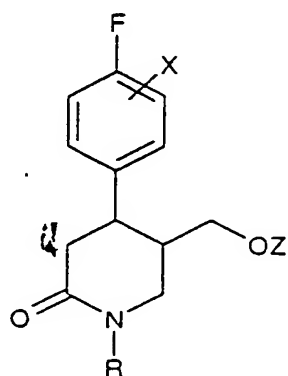
(1)

in which R is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl, aryl, acyl, alkoxycarbonyl, arylalkoxycarbonyl, aryloxycarbonyl group, and Z is hydrogen or an alkyl, aralkyl or aryl group, especially a hydrogen atom or a 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl group,

which comprises reduction of a compound of structure (4a) or (4b)



(4a)



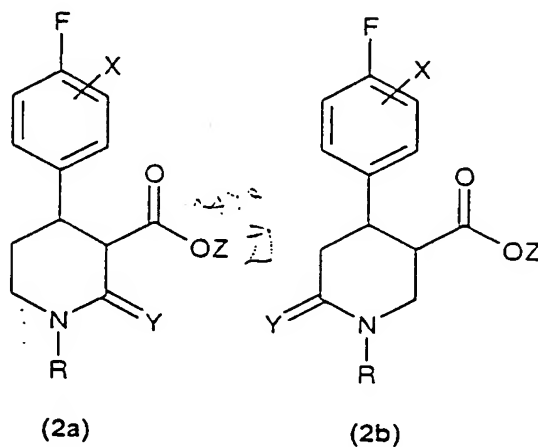
(4b)

where X is one or more of hydrogen or a readily reducible group such as chlorine, bromine or iodine, and

R and Z are as defined above.

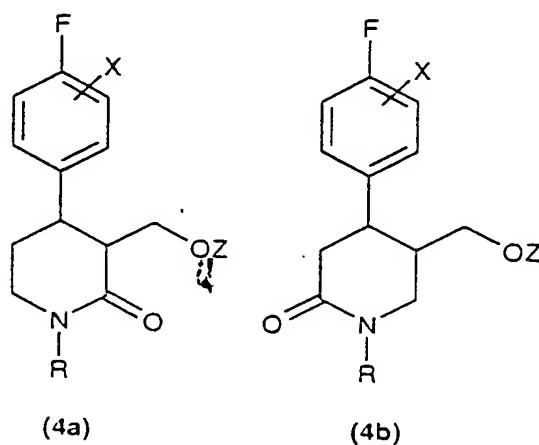
6. A process according to claim 1, in which the reduction is accomplished by catalytic hydrogenation at atmospheric or above atmospheric pressure or using hydride reagents.

5 7. A compound of structure (2a) or (2b)



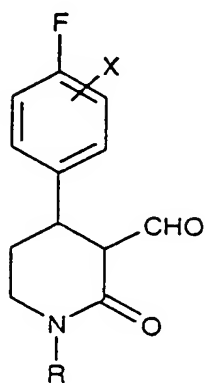
10 in which Y is oxygen or sulphur, and
R, X, and Z are as defined in claim 1.

8. A compound of structure (4a) or (4b)

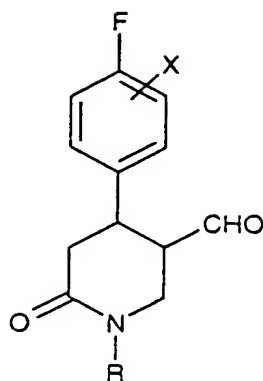


15 in which R, X, and Z are as defined in Claim 1

9. A compound of structure (4c) or (4d)



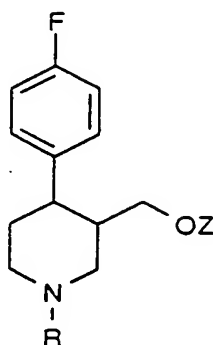
(4c)



(4d)

- 5 in which R and X are as defined in Claim 1

10. A compound of structure (1)



(1)

10

in which R is hydrogen and Z is 3,4-methylenedioxyphenyl, whenever obtained by

4

- (a) a process according to Claim 1, or

15

- (b) condensing a compound in which Z is hydrogen obtained by a process according to claim 1 with 3,4-methylenedioxyphenol, and where necessary removing a group R that is other than hydrogen.

11. A compound according to claim 9, in the form of a hydrochloride salt.
12. A method of treating the Disorders which comprises administering an effective or prophylactic amount of a compound as claimed in claim 9 to a person
5 suffering from one or more of the Disorders.